

NAVSTA NORVA INSTRUCTION 1730.5B

Subj: CHAPEL WEDDINGS

Ref: (a) SECNAVINST 1730.7B
(b) NAVSTANORVAINST 1730.2K
(c) NAVSTANORVAINST 1730.4B

Encl: (1) Wedding Application Form

1. Purpose. To set forth policies and procedures governing the use of Naval Station Norfolk Chapels for weddings and ceremonies.

2. Cancellation. NAVSTANORVAINST 1730.5A.

3. Information. The Command Chaplain is the coordinator for all weddings conducted at this command.

a. Chapel facilities are government property administered by the Command Chaplain which have been officially designated as houses of worship in fulfillment of references (a) and (b). These facilities are established primarily for the free exercise of religion by active duty personnel and their dependents and are to be responsive to their religious and spiritual needs. Naval Station Norfolk has four chapels: Our Lady of Victory (Catholic), David Adams Memorial Chapel (Protestant), Commodore Levy Chapel (Jewish), and Masjid al Da'wah (Muslim).

b. Though not a requirement for most faith groups, it is customary that retired personnel and their dependents become members of local parish churches upon retirement (sacramental jurisdiction dictates Roman Catholics join their local parish). In response to the sensitivity of civilian clergy in this regard, it is appropriate that dependents of retired personnel seek out their family pastors to conduct weddings. Family pastors will be extended the courtesy of using the chapel facilities for such weddings. Personnel assigned to the Office of the Command Chaplain will assist them.

c. Active duty personnel of other commands are normally referred to the chaplains of those commands. Those chaplains are invited to use the Naval Station Norfolk Chapels.

4. Action

a. Eligibility. "Eligible person" refers to either the bride or groom who at the time of application holds a Uniformed Service Identification and Privilege Card.

b. Scheduling. Complete enclosure (1) and submit it to the Command Chaplain at least 30 days prior to your desired wedding date.

(1) Chapels may be reserved up to six months in advance.

(2) First completed application received, first served.

(3) Wedding parties will be assigned up to a three-hour time block for the wedding ceremony, and one hour for the rehearsal.

(4) Protestant weddings will be performed in David Adams Memorial Chapel. Rehearsals are scheduled on Friday from 1600-1700 and 1700-1800. Weddings are scheduled on Saturdays at 1200 (1100-1400) and 1500 (1400-1700).

(5) Roman Catholic weddings will be performed in Our Lady of Victory Chapel. Six months of pre-marital counseling is required for all Catholic weddings. Contact the Roman Catholic Chaplain for counseling and scheduling.

(6) The Command Chaplain, as needed, will schedule Jewish and Muslim wedding services.

(7) Wedding applicants who fail to attend their assigned rehearsal will forfeit their appointed wedding time slot unless proper notification has been made with the attending clergy/chaplain.

(8) Wedding applicants who arrive more than thirty minutes late for their assigned wedding will forfeit their wedding time slot unless prior arrangements have been made.

c. Clergy. Arrangements for the clergy/chaplain at a military chapel are separate from arrangements made for the

chapel. Make your clergy arrangements before you submit your chapel usage request as follows:

(1) Religious requirements for conducting sacerdotal events and ceremonies are established by the individual chaplain's endorsing faith group and not by the Navy. Therefore, a chaplain's authority to participate in any given wedding is governed by his/her endorsing faith group and not by the Navy. For that reason, a particular chaplain may be unable to officiate at certain weddings.

(2) The clergy/chaplain who agrees to perform your wedding at a naval station chapel will sign the chapel usage request.

(3) All wedding officiants at naval station chapels must be registered to perform weddings in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

d. Rehearsals. Wedding rehearsals normally scheduled the evening before the wedding will be conducted by the officiant and assisted by assigned enlisted personnel.

e. Accountability. Personnel requesting the use of chapel facilities for weddings are responsible for the following:

(1) Ensuring that confetti, rice, flower petals, birdseed or other materials are not used or strewn inside or outside the chapel. If candles are part of the ceremony, they must be dripless candles, and wax paper must be placed under the candle arrangement.

(2) Ensuring that nothing is attached to any chapel furniture or fixtures.

(3) Ensuring that all personal effects, flower boxes, containers, flashbulbs, personal belongings, etc., are removed from the chapel immediately following the ceremony and that the chapel is left neat and clean.

(4) Ensuring that any damage to chapel facilities is reported immediately and promptly paid for by the military member who signed the wedding application form.

(5) Ensuring that all sanctuary furnishings remain in place (pulpits, lecterns, pews, etc.). You may not access the sound system except under the guidance of the duty person.

f. Fees. There is no charge for the use of the chapels or for the services of an active duty chaplain or enlisted person. Voluntary contributions may be made to the Religious Offering Fund, such contributions allow for benevolence to religious and civic charities.

g. Music. An authorized chapel organist will be used for wedding services. Names and telephone numbers of chapel organists will be provided upon request. All fee negotiation rests between the organist and the wedding applicant. Musicians will be paid prior to the scheduled beginning of the wedding. With the approval of the chapel pastor, appropriate alternative music sources may also be used.

G. L. BECKER

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